

Message Text

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ORIGIN SCI-06

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R 191849Z FEB 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARA 2 LINE 5 MISSING)

E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: TSPA, JA

SUBJ: FUEL FOR N LAUNCHER

FOR SCIATT

1. ONLY US MANUFACTURER (FMC CORP.) OF UDMH (UNSYMMETRICAL DIS-METHYL HYDRAZINE) ROCKET FUEL MUST STOP PRODUCTION BECAUSE A CHEMICAL USED IN MANUFACTURE HAS BEEN DETERMINED TO BE DANGEROUS CARCINOGEN. FUEL ITSELF IS NOT A CARCINOGEN. WHILE ROCKETDYNE NOW HAS IN HAND SUFFICIENT SUPPLY TO FINISH TESTING PROGRAM FOR JAPANESE N-LAUNCHER SECOND STAGE MOTOR, PERMISSION FOR ITS USE HAS BEEN SUSPENDED BY DOD PENDING QUOTE ESTABLISHMENT OF PRIORITIES UNQUOTE FOR ITS USE. THUS THERE ARE TWO PROBLEMS: IT MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE TO COMPLETE IN A TIMELY MANNER THE TESTING OF THE MOTOR; AND IF JAPANESE WERE PLANNING TO PURCHASE UDMH FROM THE US FOR FLIGHTS OF N-LAUNCHER, FUEL MAY NOT BE READILY AVAILABLE. (IT IS ESTIMATED TO REQUIRE AT LEAST TWO YEARS EITHER TO MEET REQUIREMENTS FOR HANDLING SUBJECT CHEMICAL OR TO BRING UP ALTERNATE PRODUCTION LINES THAT DO NOT USE

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THIS CHEMICAL.)

2. WE DO NOT DESIRE TO INFORM THE JAPANESE OF THESE
POTENTIAL PROBLEM AREAS UNTIL WE HAVE A CLEARER IDEA OF THE
OUTCOME OF THE PRIORITY SETTING MECHANISMS. ROCKETDYNE HAS
INFORMED US THAT JAPANESE MAY HAVE THEIR OWN SOURCE OF UDMH.
WE ARE MOST ANXIOUS TO KNOW ASAP WHETHER OR NOT THIS IS
TRUE, AND IF SOURCE MIGHT BE SUFFICIENT FOR TESTING MOTOR
AT ROCKETDYNE AND EVEN FOR POSSIBLE SALE TO US AIR FORCE.

3. WE REQUEST EMBASSY'S EVALUATION OF IMPACT OF SUSPENSION
OF USE AND POSSIBLE FUTURE UNAVAILABILITY OF UDMH ON
JAPANESE SPACE PROGRAM AND ON US-JAPAN COOPERATION IN THE
FIELD. CAN EMBASSY ESTIMATE POSSIBLE PUBLIC REACTION TO
DISCLOSURE THAT MANUFACTURING PROCESS USES DANGEROUS
CARCINOGEN? REQUEST ADVICE ON HOW THIS MATTER MIGHT BEST
BE BROACHED WITH THE GOJ. KISSINGER

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